

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- The House Appropriations Committee today unanimously approved an amendment introduced by Congressman Sam Farr (D-Carmel) to legislation that will continue funding military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. His amendment, related to the military presence in Iraq, requires the administration to submit quarterly reports to Congress identifying troop drawdown status and goals.

"What this amendment does is take the president's announced policy of the troop drawdown and ask that troop drawdown to be reported to Congress. We've never had this information before," Rep. Farr said during committee consideration of the amendment. "The administration has as much leeway as possible to carry out its policy in withdrawing the troops, and I'm supporting that. But I think that our responsibility is one of oversight. This gives us the information to do that oversight."

The quarterly reports must include three elements:

- How the Iraqi government is assuming responsibilities for reconciliation initiatives as U.S. troops depart.
- How the drawdown of military forces complies with the president's planned withdrawal goals.
- The roles and responsibilities of remaining contractors in Iraq as troops depart, including anticipated number of contractors to remain in Iraq.

"We're finally seeing the beginning of the end of our Iraq occupation," Rep. Farr said following the hearing. "I remain convinced that the war was wrong and I encourage getting our troops out as quickly as possible. To make sure that happens, it's important that Congress knows exactly what is going on in the country, and this amendment will ensure that we have that information."

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